

3 rejection emails, ready to send

Scaled to what the candidate spent. Each specific comes from a scorecard line: observable, job-related, tied to a criterion you published. Sent from a real name, within 48 hours.

1. After the CV screen

3 lines and a fast no. Detail here reads as performance, not respect.

Subject: Your application for Senior Backend Engineer

Hi [Name],

Thank you for applying. We are not taking your application further: for this role we are prioritising candidates with production experience running a service end to end, which the CV did not show. If that changes, the ad stays open until [date] and I would read a new application myself.

[First name], [Role], [Company]

2. After a first round

One specific from the scorecard and one thing to work on. 4 minutes with a scorecard, impossible without one.

Subject: Your interview with [Company]

Hi [Name],

Thank you for the hour on [day]. We are not moving to the next round.

What we saw: in the practical round the solution ran and the edge case you named yourself was tested, which is what we look for. The gap we scored was on the design line: the components were drawn before the requirements were established, and when the load doubled it was not clear what breaks first.

One thing to work on, if it is useful: before drawing anything, spend the first 5 minutes on scale and constraints, out loud. That is the habit our strongest interviews share.

[First name], [Role], [Company]

3. After a full loop

3 sentences of context, 2 or 3 specifics, 1 thing to work on, and an offer to talk only if you can honestly staff it.

Subject: Your interviews with [Company]

Hi [Name],

Thank you for the day with us on [date]. Four people spent time with you and all four wrote up what they saw, so I can tell you where the decision landed and why. We are not making an offer for this role.

What carried: in the design round you chose a queue early and explained the trade-off without being asked, and you named the consumer as the bottleneck before the interviewer did. In the practical round you said what you did not know instead of guessing.

What we scored as the gap: recovery. When the constraint changed mid-design, the retry model stayed open and the design did not get walked back. Two interviewers recorded the same thing independently.

One thing to work on: practise changing a design after a constraint moves, out loud, with someone pushing back. It is the difference between the senior and staff lines on our scorecard, and you are close.

If you want 15 minutes on the phone about this, reply and I will find a slot this week. [Delete this line if you cannot.]

[First name], [Role], [Company]

Safe and unsafe, side by side

UNSAFE (DESCRIBES THE PERSON, OR CITES NOTHING YOU PUBLISHED)	SAFE (DESCRIBES THE BEHAVIOUR, POINTS AT A SCORECARD LINE)
"You seemed nervous."	"The requirements were not established before the design started."
"Not a culture fit."	"Asked before assuming on 3 occasions; on the ownership line the examples were tasks assigned rather than a system run."
"We were looking for someone more senior" (when the ad named no level)	"On the design line we score naming a trade-off unprompted as senior; here it needed prompting."
"After careful consideration we have decided to move forward with other candidates."	Any of the 3 emails above.

The split that makes 40 a month survivable

Interviewers write evidence into the scorecard while it is fresh, terse and factual. The recruiter turns those lines into the email and owns the tone. A model may draft the prose from the scorecard lines, under 2 guardrails: it adds nothing that is not in the input, and a human approves every message. AI never decides who is rejected.